

But Huldah was obdurate. With all her hard, practical sense if she had stopped to analyze the situation, she would have realized that she was perpetrating a mutual injustice—she would have recognized that it was actual love for Bryan that caused her to distrust her own ability to make him happy, and, therefore, ordinary rules did not apply.

So Bryan Wylie went away disconsolate and Huldah returned to a daily, dreary grind of her monotonous life, thinking only of duty. Within a year both her uncle and her aunt died. Their estate was trivial. When it was all over the family lawyer handed Huldah a few hundred dollars and she went to the city.

Huldah found a cheap but pleasant room in the home of a poor widow and marked out a prospective business career. Her idea was to find office work. She wrote a fair hand, was bright and intelligent, could pick up stenography and in time graduate into a good-class office assistant. She was doomed to disappointment at first, however. Her lack of knowledge of typewriting stood in her way. She sought employment in less pretentious fields.

One day she was passing a five-and-ten-cent store when she noticed in its window a sign: "Lady Assistant Wanted." The store was on a side street, one door removed from a main thoroughfare and did not present any charm of locality or attractiveness as to the window display. However, Huldah entered the place, wearied with seeking a position and glad to take anything that would introduce her into city business ways.

A man, apparently the proprietor of the place, stood behind a counter figuring over some bills. He did not appear to be in love with his business, judging from the indifferent expression on his face. He looked up.

"What is it, miss?" he asked, and then explosively: "Oh, Huldah!"

She would have retreated but it was too late. The storekeeper was

Bryan Wylie and he came out animatedly to greet her. Her quick eye told her that he was a disappointed man and she lingered. He told her so himself, after she had consented to sit down and chat over old times.

Her dreary tale was soon recited. That of Bryan was quite as depressing. He had come to the city, had found work and saved some money. A chance had offered to invest in the present store. He had done so, to his cost.

"No trade, no capital. If I had it, I've made a bad mess of it all," he admitted bitterly. "I'm going to try to sell out and go back to a salary. Huldah, it gives me new life to meet an old friend like you!"

"If I could help you out I would be glad, Bryan," spoke Huldah.

He jumped at the suggestion. He could pay \$6 a week.

"Remember," she said, "you and I are to forget everything but business."

"You may. I can't!" he answered her frankly. "I shall always love you, but no word of it shall pass my lips to offend you."

Huldah entered upon her duties. She was at the store at 8 in the morning and left at 6 in the afternoon. Bryan got a chance to work temporarily as a traveling salesman in the suburbs. Huldah advised him to accept the position and let her see what she could make out of the little store.

"Why, Huldah!" he exclaimed, as he returned from his first trip, "what does this mean?"

For, marvelously, magically, the space had been doubled and took in two entrances, one on the main street.

"I had a chance to get a lease of the store back of this and risked it," explained Huldah. "The people you buy from were willing to double the stock on long terms of payment and we are keeping three clerks and last week we made \$100 clear!"

"We, You!" cried the delighted